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SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-sixth year

Letter dated 21 April 1991 from the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I would like to draw your attention to the barbaric Scud attack launched by the Kabul regime on 21 April 1991 against the town of Asadabad, capital of the Kunar Province of Afghanistan, which borders Pakistan.

According to preliminary reports, more than 500 civilians were killed and over 700 injured when two Scud missiles hit the centre of the town around 8 p.m. local time. Hundreds of houses and shops were destroyed and the Asadabad bazaar was completely devastated. Widespread fires caused by the missile blasts compounded the destruction and obstructed rescue work. Bodies of the victims are still being recovered from the debris, and most of them are burnt beyond recognition.

The Government of Pakistan condemns this criminal use of weapons of mass destruction perpetrated by the Kabul regime against the Afghan population. Such acts directly affect Pakistan, producing fresh flows of Afghan refugees. Following the attack on Asadabad, hundreds of injured Afghans and their relatives have started arriving in our border towns and hospitals.

Since the liberation of Khost by the Afghan Mujahidin on the last day of March 1991, the Kabul regime has intensified Scud attacks and aerial bombardment against Mujahidin-controlled towns and other civilian centres.

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* A/46/50.

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During April, the town of Khost has been subjected to more than 40 Scud missile attacks and numerous aerial bombings. Even on the day of Id al-Fitr, the day of rejoicing and festivities for Muslims all over the world marking the end of the holy month of Ramadan, Khost was bombed by the regime's aircraft.

While the brutal use of weapons of mass destruction by the Kabul regime against the Afghan population underscores the desperation of the Kabul regime, it also damages the prospects of a political settlement in Afghanistan. It was for this reason that in my letter of 1 April 1991 (A/46/127-S/22428), on behalf of the Government of Pakistan, I had conveyed a request to you to use your influence to stop these brutal attacks, which are taking a heavy toll in human life and causing vast devastation. The Scud attack against Asadabad obliges us to strongly reiterate our request.

I wish to take this opportunity to refer to the baseless allegations, specifically the charge that Pakistani personnel were involved in the Mujahidin operations to liberate Khost, made in the letter from the Foreign Minister of the Kabul regime circulated as the annex to document A/46/140-S/22501 of 12 April 1991. Facts belie these fabrications.

One of the first acts of the Mujahidin commanders' Shura, established immediately after the surrender by the Kabul regime's garrison in Khost, was to invite International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) personnel and foreign correspondents. Since then, Khost has been frequently visited by a large number of international observers. Their reports cover every facet of the Mujahidin victory of Khost and the Mujahidin administration of the city, thus providing vivid factual refutation of Kabul's baseless charges.

The letter by the Foreign Minister of the Kabul regime also makes accusations about mistreatment of prisoners of war by the Mujahidin. This charge is equally false, because from the very first day, the Mujahidin commanders' Shura had involved ICRC in providing humanitarian assistance in the area, including the handling of the prisoners of war. ICRC officials remain actively engaged in looking after the prisoners. Representatives of the international media have visited prisoners and have interviewed them. There are no reports of mistreatment of the prisoners of war. On the contrary, the Scud attacks and aerial bombardment by the Kabul regime have complicated the task of shifting them, especially those needing medical care, to safer places.

I once again take this opportunity to reaffirm to you the resolute commitment of the Government of Pakistan to promote a political settlement of the Afghan conflict and our readiness to cooperate with the peace efforts by you.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under item 29 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Jamsheed K. A. MARKER
Ambassador and Permanent Representative